

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9359

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2896

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINS MO

SUBJ: KENITRA TRIAL OPENS

1. MILITARY TRIAL OF 157 PERSONS ACCUSED IN CONNECTION WITH MARCH EVENTS BEGAN JUNE 25 AT KENITRA. LIST OF THOSE ON TRIAL PUBLISHED IN ISTIQLALI DAILY "AL ALAM" SAME DAY INCLUDES PROMINENT UNFP/ RABAT MEMBERS OMAR BENJELLOUN AND MOHAMED EL YAZHGHI. TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO TAKE SOME TIME, PERHAPS UPWARDS TO THREE WEEKS, AND TO RESULT IN ANUMBER OF DEATH SENTENCES. ACCUSED ARE REPRESENTED BY BATTERY OF ABOUT 100 LAWYERS, MOST OF WHOM WERE APPOINTED BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, ACCORDING TO THE MOROCCAN NEWS AGENCY (MAP). AMONG THOSE PARTICIPATING IN DEFENSE IS ISTIQLALI LEADER (AND FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE) M' HAMMED BOUCETTA. MAP ALSO REPORTS THAT TWO ALGERIAN LAWYERS WILL ATTEND TRIAL AS OBSERVERS.

2. NUMBER OF ACCUSED IN CONNECTION WITH MARCH ATTACKS HAS GROWN STEADILY SINCE INITIAL MINISTRY OF INTERIOR COMMUNIQUE MARCH 8 SAYING THREE PERSONS HAD PARTICIPATED IN ATTACK, AND SECOND COMMUNIQUE MARCH 14 REPORTING THAT THREE REBELS HAD BEEN KILLED, ELEVEN WERE UNDER ARREST AND TWO AT LARGE. LIST OF NAMES PUBLISHED BY "AL ALAM" SUGGESTS THAT REBELS WHO INFILTRATED HAD ACCOMPLICES AMONG LOCAL BERBER TRIBESMEN. TWO FAMILY NAMES (AZZAM AND BOUABDALLAH) APPEAR SEVEN TIMES, AND OTHER
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RECOGNIZABLY BERBER NAMES (AMAHZOUN, AMEZZIANE) ALSO CROP
UP FREQUENTLY. ONE KEY TO TRIAL WILL BE WHETHER STATE CAN PRODUCE
EVIDENCE LINKING URBAN INTELLECTUALS (TEACHERS, LAWYERS,
JOURNALISTS AND ONE DOCTOR, ACCORDING TO AL ALAM"), WITH
RURAL PEOPLE WHO APPARENTLY DID THE FIGHTING.
ROCKWELL

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